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ENLARGED FACILITIES; BETTER BUSINESS.

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Left - Judge Paige

When the Opera House was built, the stage seemed commodious enough to people who had seen Buffalo Bill do his Westerns on the cramped stage of Eagle Hall, or who had seen Edwin Booth transform the narrow boards of Phenix Hall when he gave his great performances as Hamlet and Richelieu. But a dozen years had seen a change in the American theater, and the tendency was now to productions on a large scale--too large for the ^{original} stage of the Opera House. Several attractions had passed Concord by for that reason. Now Manager Benjamin C. White determined to remedy that.

In the spring of 1886 it was announced that the City Government had given permission for an enlargement, and that the work would begin about July 1 (Monitor, April 26, 1886). The work went forward promptly, and the addition was nearly completed by the middle of August. An extension of wood, ~~construction~~, overhanging the alley west of the building, was constructed on the third and fourth stories. Seventeen feet in depth, it provided a stage fifty-three by thirty-seven feet measured on the outside, and a depth back of the curtain of thirty-five feet instead of twenty-four. The stage was lowered four inches and given a pitch in order to improve visibility from the floor of the auditorium. The loft was fitted with five bridges. Fire hose was provided. The old green room was divided into five dressing rooms. A new gas outfit was put in, with 40 footlights and 130 border lights. New wings, borders and back scenes were built and painted and the old scenery was repainted. The carpentry was superintended by George Cole, formerly of Concord, more lately of the Redmund-Barry Company, and about to become stage carpenter of the Boston Museum (Monitor, August 13, September 3, 11, 1886).

For six months after the house reopened, Cole, as opportunity offered, built three complete new sets of scenery on the stage, and Louis Deribas painted them (Monitor, December 15, 1886, March 7, 1887). The season of the reopening was one of the best that the house had ever seen (Monitor, June 9, 1887). The total number of bookings was nearly equal to that of the first season, and surpassed any other intervening record. Moreover, attendance seems on the whole to have increased markedly as the result of the enterprise in improving the stage and its appointments.

Season of 1886-1887.

Manager White had a brilliant idea for the reopening; no less than to get Denman Thompson for two nights, for "Joshua Whitcomb" (recently shelved) the first night and the new sequel, "The Old Homestead", the second night. Success would have meant a real event in theatrical history, for the double bill was something Denman Thompson seems never to have done anywhere. But the management was disappointed; the star could give Concord only one date, and that later in the season.

For the reopening, White had to depend on "Over the Garden Wall", no novelty in Concord. That was put on the night of September 15 by Mr. and Mrs. George S. Knight with "brilliant success". The piece was declared to have been improved since its last appearance here, and of course it was noted that the stage was much better. The Monitor failed even to mention the fact (then unrecognized) that the night was underlined by the first Concord appearance of a coming star. The advance advertising mentioned as in the support the three St. Felix Sisters, now forgotten, and "the eccentric comedian, Edwin Foy". But when the Monitor man wrote up the performance, Eddie Foy was not even mentioned.

The high marks of the dramatic season were a "farewell" appearance by Rhea in "Frou-Frou" on October 15, Margaret Mather in "As You Like It" on April 28, and Denman Thompson in "The Old Homestead" on November 8. Rhea drew a large audience. Her Gilbete was a "powerful, even, and well sustained conception", though the death scene was "too ghastly". Eight hundred people came out in a pouring rain to see Mather. Only by comparison to her Juliet and Leah was her Rosalind at all disappointing. Milnes Levick as Jacques and Frederick Paulding as Orlando were remarkably good (they always were that, whatever they did). Denman Thompson set up a new house record; every reserved seat was sold before the ^{company arrived,} ~~doors opened,~~ and some of the hundreds of disappointed people were paying an advance of one-third to get coveted seats.

Later times may have their "Able's Irish Rose" and such-like, but Denman Thompson's creation of Uncle Josh was a continuous-performance record which will hardly be overtaken again. Joseph Jefferson in "Rip" surpassed it, but not in respect to continuous performances. Jefferson would now and then forsake "Rip", but Denman Thompson stuck by his creation continuously until he was done, and the people never tired of seeing him. "Joshua Whitcomb" was a short skit for several years. Then it was expanded into a full-length play and done continuously for eleven seasons. Then followed the character of Uncle Josh in final form, season after season. The success was due to the truthfulness of the drawing of the character and of the characters that surrounded Uncle Josh. They were drawn from Thompson's memories of real characters in Swanzey, New Hampshire. There was no exaggeration in their drawing, and Thompson permitted no burlesquing by his actors and actresses. Everything was simplicity and truth and genuineness. One might call the business "hokum", but it was

genuine Yankeeedom. For the most part, Thompson chose genuine Yankees to play the parts. They did not have to be great actors, so long as they could be natural. Two of his company he was to draw from Concord--Will Cressy and George Wright--and they had real talent, but their talent was rather narrowly confined to the depiction of the character they knew in every-day life. But Denman Thompson was the great natural of them all. He never had but moderate success in his life-long profession of comedy-acting until he identified himself with Uncle Josh in middle life. As the Monitor said after his first appearance here in the new play, "No wonder...that Concord people turn out to do him honor."

There is a story about the grass-roots character of "The Old Homestead". Old-timers will recall one of the lines that always brought a laugh, "I could prove it/^{too,} if old Bill Jones was alive." There was more truth to that than stage-truth. The Bill Jones thus made famous was a real person. After his ^{stage} fame was made at the opening of the play in the Boston Theater in April, 1846, Long John Wentworth came back from Chicago to visit his old home and friends. When he got back to Chicago, he wrote for his paper, the News, some account of his tour. While here, he said, he met Ezra Jones, grandson of "old Bill Jones". Wentworth added that he knew "old Bill" (Gen. William Jones) intimately; that Jones was a man having such a wonderful amount and variety of information that he was relied on more than any encyclopedia or almanac. Jones lived in the only brick house in the county/ (probably an exaggeration). At his request he was buried in sight of the house with a stone on which was cut "Here Reposeth Old Bill Jones." Wentworth taught Denman Thompson's father in 1821, and remembered Denman himself ~~in 1845~~ at twelve "as a freckle-faced boy in 1845, with an unholy passion for circuses, charades, and other fashionable iniquities" (Monitor, September 28, 1886).

Next in importance dramatically were two full-week appearances, in November and May, of Atkinson & Cook's Stock Company, a ten-twenty-third show. The leading lady was Miss Maude Banks. Concord received her with the greatest eclat, though she was more elocutionist than actress. Her leading man was Edward P. Sullivan, and he was good. John T. Craven, late of the Boston Theater, was the leading comedian. They gave a "really fine performance" of "Ingomar"; they did "Little Em'ly" better than the high-priced Thayer Company did it nine years before; their "Lady of Lyons" was "thoroughly excellent"; while "Camille" was "the greatest success of the engagement, and as a whole will rank with any similar production on the local stage for a long time." That was first-week opinion. Having practically filled the house for seven performances, they were immediately booked for a return.

On their second visit, they were greeted with very large and enthusiastic audiences. Miss Banks was again "superb" as Camille. "Ingomar", "The Lady of Lyons", and "Little Em'ly" also were repeated. New plays, for this company, included Bartley Campbell's "Divorce", Tom Taylor's "The Ticket-of-Leave Man", and "A Celebrated Case." The company sought comparison with the best traveling companies of the past, and results were satisfactory to them and to their patrons.

Local amateur performances were frequent. The most noteworthy was the production of Frances Hodgson Burnett's "Esmeralda" by "Our Club", directed by Belle Marshall Locke, with N. C. Nelson as stage manager. Mrs. Locke was the Esmeralda and W. P. Underhill made of the part of Old Man Rogers "his greatest success." George B. Wright made his first appearance of importance as Dave Hardy. The success was enormous. There was a crowded house, and the performance

was repeated at the Asylum and at Pittsfield.

Mention should also be made of Mrs. Locke's success in putting on a three-act play, "Rebecca's Triumph", with her child elocutionary pupils, ranging from nine to fifteen years of age and taking parts of people whose ages were supposed to range up to sixty. In spite of the obstacles to such an ambitious attempt, the performance went smoothly for the whole three acts.

Minnie Hauk, prima donna of the Mapleson Opera Company, made her first New Hampshire appearance at the Opera House on December 1. Besides a miscellaneous first part in which Chevalier de Kontski "simply repeated his former triumphs here" on the piano, and Mme. Hauk and three other vocalists sang, the third act of "Faust" was given in costume, "the finest bit of opera seen here". The audience was "large and distinguished".

The excellent Gilbert Opera Company gave two performances on October 25 and 26 under the direction of George Lowell Tracy and drew large audiences. They carried a fine chorus of twenty. The first night they gave "The Mascot", with a cast including Florence Bate, James Gilbert, Bessie Fairbairn, J. A. Osgood, and J. A. Montgomery. The second night they presented Mr. Lowell's "Uncle Tom", with W. J. McLaughlin in the name-part. Popular prices prevailed, with a top of thirty-five cents.

The Boston Pinafore Company gave the Gilbert and Sullivan piece on April 11. They shot higher as to prices (35 and 50¢) and drew only a fair audience, though the cast was excellent or capital except for poor performers as Josephine and Captain Corcoran.

For other music, except the excellent work of Blaisdell's Orchestra at plays and dances, Concord that season had to depend

upon the daring of Charles H. Stone and Henri G. Blaisdell. Those two gentlemen, to their sorrow, had competed the year before with separate courses of entertainments. For this season, therefore, they united in the Blaisdell-Stone course of six concerts, ^{four} ~~xxxx~~ by the symphony orchestra and ^{two} ~~xxxx~~ by visiting companies. ~~(Monitor)~~ They also conducted a lyceum and musical bureau (Monitor, July 14, 1886).

The symphony orchestra of twenty-five played on October 12, December 13, ^{and February 16,} ~~xx~~ and January 25, ^{Beethoven's Fifth,} ~~xx~~ doing Mendelssohn's Fourth Symphony, and movements from Schubert's B Minor, Raff's Lenora and the Beethoven Seventh, besides overtures and miscellaneous numbers. They had the assistance of Elizabeth M. Roberts, contralto, Marshall P. Wilder, the great humorist, Mrs. Maud M. Starkweather, soprano, the Temple Male Quartette, Miss Etta Kileski, the excellent soprano, Mme. Ricard, impersonator, Jessie Eldridge, fine reader, ~~and~~ W. S. Sweet, harmonica, the Ladies' Schumann Quartette, and Miss Grace E. Drew, local reader.

The visiting companies in this course were topped by the Maritana Opera Company on November 10 in "The Madcap", Leon Keach, director, supported by Blaisdell's Orchestra. The company included Alice May Esty, Gertrude Edmonds, J. C. Bartlett, Lon F. Brine, H. L. Cornell, and Myron Clark. On January 12 came the Standard Concert Company--Louise Elliott, soprano, Mary How, contralto, Lillian Chandler, violin, J. H. Ricketson, tenor, S. Kronberg, baritone, and Rudolph King, pianist. The audiences were generally large. At the last symphony concert there was given for the first time the overture, "The Pilgrims" by Harry Brooks Day (formerly of Concord--brother of Dr. Arthur K. Day's), the composer conducting the orchestra.

Lectures were losing popularity for the time being. William H. Murray lectured on November 14 and held five hundred people "almost spellbound for an hour and a half." Two nights later he read from his then famous Adirondack tales and sketches and gave four hundred

"such enjoyment as few public readings afford."

For spectacles and scenic effects^{such} as the Opera House had never before admitted, there was "Zo Zo" on February 2, with a return engagement on March 5. On April 5 Bartley Campbell's "Siberia" had its 1136th performance.~~xxxx~~ It was a large production, with a large cast, and the audience was large also.

It remained for a trained animal show to break all Opera House records. It was Prof. Bristol's Equescurriculum. The hog Latin was too much for us, so we called it Bristol's Horse Show. They played here for three days, February 21, 22, and 23, with a matinee on the last day. The excitement began Monday with a street parade, forbidden to children in school. In the lead, according to newspaper accounts, Bristol drove his horse, Colonel Wood, without bridle or reins, merely by the touch of the whip. He was followed by a band made up of six of his seven employees. There followed sixteen of the other horses and ponies of the twenty-two in the show. Chief attraction was Denver, the clown donkey. A cur chased Denver, yapping, from Railroad Square partway up Main Street. Finally Denver planted his fore-feet, let go with his hind-feet, and the dog sailed out of the street.

But an eleven-year-old schoolboy could, and did, see the show in the Opera House. The curtain rose upon the horse-school unattended on the stage--strolling about, rolling on the tan-bark. Then Bristol entered, and they all took position. After that, all was pure joy. The horses performed evolutions. They jumped over one another. The mare Mattie was given mathematical problems to stump fourth-grade boys, and with her hoof counted out the answers. Hornet, a white mustang, jumped the rope and imitated a rocking-horse. There were hours of fun. The Monitor said that this was the show that more than kept every promise made in advance. What more could be said?

Only that this was probably by far the best trained animal show that ever took the road in America. Men and beast alike traveled in a specially designed 72-foot car that was always attached to passenger trains. One boy remembers Prof. Bristol with double gladness--for his horses and the excruciatingly funny Denver, and for his son Sidney, who was to be a dear friend in college.

The Opera House record: Bristol's show

First performance, attendance	1059,	sale \$444.40
Second,	1043,	471.75
Third,	1237	423.75
Fourth,	931	443.65
Total,	4270	1883.55

The season may be said, all in all, to have been the high point yet in Opera House history.

"Professor" Bristol reminds one of the peculiar way our fathers had of attaching that "handle" to their names whenever they claimed peculiar expertness. "Professor" Kent was principal of the High School. "Professor" Pingault taught French locally. That was not so bad. As for the rest, they ranged all the way down from "Professor" Blaisdell to Monkey Mitchell, who was "Professor" either because he was a pedestrian or because he shined shoes.

Season of 1887-1888.

During this season the ticket-office was moved fifteen feet to the point nearly opposite the stair to the third floor, the position remembered by the author and already described. Probably it had theretofore been about opposite the Park Street stair. At the beginning of the season, for the first time, house programs were issued in place of privately printed programs, sometimes no more than copies of the advertising hand-bills. Sometimes local concerns had issued programs, often on decorative cards advertising their own wares. The house program was about 8 3/4 by 13 inches, arranged in three

columns. Originally they were two-page sheets; later they became four-page. The middle column of page 1 was devoted to the program proper, and all the rest to advertisements of local business or of coming attractions.

While the bookings of this season were slightly fewer than for the prior season, there was no letdown either in the quality of the attractions or the attendance. The dramatic features included Rhea in W. S. Gilbert's "Pygmalion and Galatea", Januscheck's positive farewell as "Meg Merriles", the current hit "Jim the Penman" by a Madison Square Theatre company, and the first local appearance of the popular comedienne Annie Pixley. William Gillette's "Held By the Enemy", one of the best plays of the time, was presented. The always welcome Maggie Mitchell came in "Ray", which was less favorably received than her early hits.

Dion Boucicault appeared in his famous play "The Shaughraun", so Concord had at last an opportunity to hear and see this great author-actor-manager in his greatest part. Unfortunately, though he was good, age had dulled the animation of performances of his prime. Margaret Mather once more did "Juliet", better than ever, to the Romeo of Frederick Paulding and the Mercutio of Milnes Levick. Charles H. Hoyt, Concord native, personally brought his new piece, "A Brass Monkey", for its third performance anywhere. Denman Thompson put on "The Old Homestead" two nights successively.

Ullie Akerstrom came for two separate engagements of a week each of ten-twenty-thirt and made a great success. The Atkinson & Cook Company also did a full week at popular prices. Though only Sullivan ^{and Denison} remained of the company of the former year, some of the new members, Jerry McAuliffe, Thomas E. Shea, and Charles T. Grilley, were on the way to reputations. As a whole the company held its own.

Annie Louise Ames had succeeded Maude Banks as leading lady, and though she was less good as an elocutionist, she was received as a more natural actress. Miss Banks had gone a-starring. During the season she came to the Opera House twice, once in "Joan of Arc", the second time in "His Evil Genius". Another full week of dime show was given by the John S. Moulton Dramatic Company.

Outstanding among the shows were three attractions. The Hanlon Brothers, superb acrobatic pantomimists, appeared here for the first time, doing "The New Voyage en Suisse". Thatcher, Primrose and West's Minstrels made their first appearance in Concord and won their well-deserved reputation as the best show of the sort on the road. Greatest of all was Henry E. Dixey in Edward E. Rice's "Adonis", with Amelia Summerville in his support--a world-famous star in a world-famous part, the greatest production that had yet appeared on the enlarged stage of the Opera House. After the show, Dixey sat in a twelve-hour poker bout with local experts. He lost \$200, and said that he did not mind the loss of the money so much as he did the fact that he lost it in N.H. (Monitor, Feb. 15, 1889). The Bennett-Moulton Comic Opera Company did a whole week with great acceptance at the low prices of 10, 20 and 30 cents. The excellent Gilbert Opera Company returned for two performances on successive nights, giving the best performance yet seen here of "The Mikado" and also presenting "Iolanthe". The great Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore brought his band of 45--the greatest band in the world of that day--on January 26, the day of the biggest storm in years, yet six hundred went in the storm to the Opera House (the author among them) and battled the blizzard going home afterwards. It was a magnificent concert, and a magnificent storm which was to be surpassed in a few weeks by the harshest blizzard of history.

There was further proof this season that lectures were "Passé" here. Sam Small, fascinating speaker, got a fair crowd on his first appearance; on the second he did not make expenses; curiosity to see a man was exhausted by one sight. The Rev. J. H. Vincent also failed to make

expenses, though he had been successful on prior occasions here and as head of the Chautauque movement had a considerable number of followers in Concord.

The local entertainment course, again managed by Charles H. Stone alone, was brilliant but financially disastrous. The Blaisdell Symphony players gave two of their remarkably fine concerts in this course, and there was a miscellaneous program by the Temple Male Quartette, Alfred de Seve, excellent violinist, and others. The failure was due to the great event of the year musically. Mr. Stone for what was then the enormous expenditure of \$700 got The Bostonians to come here. The company had made their debut at Worcester the week before, ~~they came here~~. Principals, chorus, and orchestra numbered together sixty-three, and it took three cars to transport them and their paraphernalia. They gave a performance of "Fatinitza" that surpassed anything ever seen here in opera. Measured by the standards of this day, they were dirt-cheap at \$700; not so in 1887. ^{(#2,250 and #3 for the course - Monitor, Aug. 20, 1887),} At the scale of prices, Stone was bound to lose money even if he packed the Opera House. After the fourth entertainment, he wrote off a net loss of \$300 and cancelled the other two concerts.

Of local product, the May Party was significant for reaching the highest mark ever. On that occasion the author was permitted for the first time to see a dramatic performance, probably because the playlet was such a sweet little thing as Frances Hodgson Burnett's "Editha's Burglar". Dr. Edward French, of Concord, did the dramatizing and was said to have done a good job. In any event, a twelve-year-old boy was deeply impressed with his first play, and recalls clearly, after more than 55 years, the smooth performance of William P. Underhill as Editha's father and the start when he saw the burglar (Henry B. Colby) coming through the window.

Concord was fortunate in the possession of two geniuses at the time. One was John W. Odlin, extraordinary musician and wit, who made in 1838 his last contribution to Concord's entertainment (he died ^{within a} ~~later in the~~ year). Once more he got up a minstrel show, this time called the Concord Ideal Minstrels. On April 2 they appeared at the Opera House for the benefit of the hospital. They had the biggest house of the season, nearly 1100, and they gave the longest entertainment that had ever been given there. The curtain rose at 3 for the overture that Odlin had composed for the company. It finally fell at twenty-five minutes after eleven. The reason was not that the show was too long, but that the enthusiastic audience insisted on an encore for every number. The chorus was especially good, but Fred Jones surpassed some of the bright lights of professional minstrelsy; Tom Kennedy, George Wright and others were splendid soloists; Leavitt, Bert Wright and Doyen, as many recall, were great banjoists; Lyna & Dunstene did things with their harmonicas; Spellman Bros., Griffin & Marsh were a great quadruple clog team; the Cressy Bros. (Will and Harry) played ^{on} everything from guitar to bottles and sticks, sang and talked; the whole company performed a great farce. With some changes the show was repeated for the Benefit of the G. A. R. on April 20, and also went barnstorming.

The very next month the other Concord genius, Henri G. Blaisdell presented the Concord Opera Company twice in "The Pirates of Penzance", with Mrs. Ella Gillette as Mabel and George B. Wright as Richard, Charles S. Conant as Frederick, and L. J. Rundlett as Maj. Gen. Stanley. It was a splendid performance, repeated at Leconia. The costumes were those used by the D'Oyly Carte Company when the opera was first produced in America. It was a financial success, as well as an artistic one.

Season of 1888-1889.

During the summer of 1888, Manager White made further improvements in the Opera House. Up to this time the floor of the auditorium had been level, except for the small raised area in the rear. The seats on the floor were settees. This was changed now, and a movable sloping floor was installed, with a grade from the rear elevation to the floor at about twelve rows from the stage. On the sections of this floor and the front level space were placed 648 folding chairs. Moreover a large Ventilator was put in the middle of the ceiling. (Monitor, September 3, 1888). It was an easy job to remove the sections of the new floor when dancing was in order, as was proved on the first test when Court Concord, Ancient Order of Foresters, held their second annual ball (Monitor, November 30, 1888).

In many respects the fourteenth season of the Opera House was less interesting than the twelfth and thirteenth, but it was nevertheless a successful one. For pure drama, there were two leading events. One was ^{the} appearance of Rhea, despite her farewell, as Beatrice in "Much Ado About Nothing", with William Harris as Benedick. The only drawback was Rhea's un-English accent. The other event was the appearance of James O'Neill, in Charles Fechter's "Monte Cristo". Less interesting (because of the play, ^{Eugene Rosenfeld's} "A Possible Case") was the appearance of the Union Square Theatre Company, an all-star aggregation including Frank Burbeck, the famous juvenile lead Robert Hilliard, and Georgie Drew Barrymore, mother of Ethel, Lionel, and John. The season was also marked by the ^{second} ~~first~~ local appearance of a currently famous play, William Gillette's "Held By the Enemy". Of scarcely less interest was one of the popular pieces of the day, "Sweet Lavender", with Miss Percy Haswell in the name part. Maude Banks was back in "A French Marriage", a poor play. Margaret Mather played Tobin's "The Honeymoon",

a vehicle less worthy than she usually adopted.

There was only one week of ten-twenty-third repertoire, by the Adams & Cook Company, successors to the Atkinson & Cook Company, but with almost entirely new casts. Thomas E. Shea and Lillie Burnham Maude Banks played 10 nights of 15, 25, 35 dramas in June with much success, were in the leads. The local amateur field was left, as far the Opera House was concerned, ^{mainly} to the pupils of Mrs. Belle Marshall Locke. They put on "Under the Laurels" on January 15, and on April 4 "Champion of Her Sex", also a scene from a play "Marie's Secret" written by Mrs. Locke, in which the author played the part of Marie and her star pupil, (of who more will be heard later) Anna Layng, played Annette. June 26 they gave the local premiere of "A Scrap of Paper", the best thing they had ever done. "Little Lord Fauntleroy" had four performances, before large audiences, two on February 5 and two on April 9. I saw the first of the four. So my parents permitted me for the second time to go to a dramatic performance. But, it seems, the first plays must be based on innocuous stories by Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett. The part of Fauntleroy was taken, when I saw it, by Wallie Eddinger, aged seven.* The writer of the "Picked Up" column in the Monitor wrote of the original of the Little Lord, Mrs. Burnett's son. He knew him in Washington during the winter of 1881-1882 at the age of eight, "a tiny elfish little fellow with a wealth of golden curls wreathing a dainty face and falling upon his shoulders. He was always dressed with exquisite taste, knickerbocker suits of velvet being a favorite." One can easily catch in the tone of those words the sentimental appreciation with which Mrs. Burnett's creation from her own household was received. Of course he was not a normal boy, ^{according to present standards,} but he satisfied some streak of sensibility latent in his elders of that day. I am pretty sure that somehow he impressed also the children, for the Monitor remarks upon the quietness and attentiveness of the large audience of children at that first matinee.

* Later Broadway star; now dead in 1929.

Denman Thompson, in the midst of his solid three years in New York, did not appear, so substitutes were tried. Early in the season came J. G. Lewis, "the president of all the Yankee comedians" (if one believed the ads) in "Si Plunkard". He was "panned" by the Monitor, with the statement that nobody who saw him would vote for him for that or any other office. He was successful as a whistler; "after that the least said the better." As the season was dying in May, Charles L. Davis tried on Concord his second edition of "Alvin Joslin", called "One of the Old Stock". That was pretty mediocre. It was Richard Golden who came nearest to being a rival of Denman Thompson. With the help of William Gill, Golden had written "Old Jed Prouty", and this was its first season. The name part, played by Golden, a very competent comedian, graduate with Dixey of Rice's "Evangeline", was based on an innkeeper for whom Golden had worked as a boy in Bucksport, Maine. He had the support of Dora Wiley, Charles Bowser, Mrs. Frank Tannehill, and other competent people. The small audience that greeted the piece at its first performance here was "completely carried away" and the piece "scored a great success".

For Grace ^{Esther} Drew, a Concord girl, it was an exciting season. Daughter of John W. Drew, who in the early years of the Opera House had won wide recognition as a ^{temperance} spell-binder, she studied elocution in Boston and returned here to teach it. On Monday, September 27, 1888, the Dalys appeared at the Opera House in "Vacation". One of the women in the cast took sick, and the manager had nearly decided to cancel the performance when he thought to inquire whether there was anybody in Concord who might do the part of the maid. He got to Miss Drew at five o'clock in the afternoon. At eight, after a scratchy rehearsal, she was on the stage, letter perfect. Tom Daly was so much pleased that after one of the acts he presented her to the audience and praised her work. He opined she would make good as a professional. Miss Drew

went on with the company and finished the week at Manchester and other places. Then the sick lady returned and Miss Drew came home. She had an offer from Manager Charles Atkinson, but her parents objected to her becoming a professional. Finally, however, they gave in, and she joined Atkinson's company under the name of Esther Grace, soon had the lead and was highly praised by the Boston Herald. (Monitor, December 3, 1888). When Rich and Harris organized the company to support Richard Golden in "Old Jed Prouty", they offered her the leading soubrette part, which she declined. Thus she lost the chance in what turned out to be a sure-fire hit. (Monitor, January 14, 1889).*

This season was unsurpassed in minstrelsy. Concord saw the three outstanding troupes of the country. Thatcher, Primrose & West returned on November 23 and gave the best show ever seen here, even better than the season before. They were followed by Johnson & Slavin on January 22, another company in the first class. On February 20 the Concord Minstrels reappeared, this time under the direction of Arthur F. Nevers, and gave another great show of local talent, thought they introduced one professional, Hank White, whom they brought for the occasion from his retirement in Vermont. On March 5 came Dockstader's Minstrels, so good that they gave neither a parade nor an outdoor concert, and Lew Dockstader was declared to be the greatest individual minstrel who had ever played here. Those who have seen him perform will not quarrel much with that. After them all, came on April 13 the Haverly-Cleveland Minstrels, with Luke Schoolcraft and other stars--good from every standpoint except in comparison with the four preceding shows. Good, but less good than the company of local amateurs.

* In September, 1889, she was leading lady of the Reuben Blue Co. (Monitor, September 6, 1889). Having a head, she forsook leads to play the maid in Bronson Howard's "Shenandoah" but was promoted to the part of Madeline West and before Christmas was winning untainted praise from the New York press. In 1903 she married George H. Alger, distinguished New York lawyer. (Monitor, December 20, 1889). Her father, John M. Drew, temperance spellbinder, followed her into the theatrical business. In the fall of 1890, he managed (with actor Harris) the Keaton Walter Martinelli Pentamime. (Monitor, September 26, 1890).

For miscellaneous entertainment, B. M. Bristol brought back his horse show--thirty horses instead of twenty-two; ~~four~~^{two} special cars instead of one. He ~~played~~^{showed} four times to audiences only less immense than before, 3941 paying \$1673.55 into Frank Mace's hands. A single block of 120 seats was ordered by telegraph from Hillsborough. Outstanding also was the great house that on December 20 witnessed the best vaudeville ever seen here up to that time, and probably at any time since, by the Howard Atheneum Star Specialty Company, with such great performers as May and Flo Irwin, Cinquevalli (the marvelous juggler) and his troupe of acrobats, and James F. Hoey, black-face comedian.

The musical season was brilliant. The Bennett-Moulton Company returned for a whole week of light opera, with prices increased a nickel to 15, 25 and 35 cents. They gave "The Mascot", Strauss's "Merry War" (twice), "The Mikado", "The Chimes of Normandy", "Robert Macaire", "The Bohemian Girl", and "Olivette". Louise Elising, Ben Lodge, Ed. Smith, and Frank Molten were still in the leads. They were preceded a few days, on November 1, by the J. C. Duff Comic Opera Company of 45 in Von Suppé's "A Trip to Africa". H. G. Blaisdell, who wrote the review for the Monitor, said that Herman Perlet was the best operatic director who had ever been seen here, and that no other company could boast two such baritones as Francis Gaillard and Hubert Wilke. His judgment may stand.

Mr. Blaisdell himself gave a single symphony concert with his orchestra of 25, augmented by Boston Symphony men, on January 31, with Mrs. Ella Gillette of Concord and J. H. Ricketson of Boston as soloists. It was the best of any that he had given during five years. On February 26, Blaisdell directed the Concord Opera Company in "Boccaccio". He imported two or three principals, but local people did Boccaccio (Arthur F. Shepard), Pietro (Charles S. Conant), Lot-

teringhi (W. P. Underhill), Lambertuccio (Hinman C. Bailey), Checco and Lo Cascio (George B. Wright), and other parts. Blaisdell's Orchestra and Miss A. M. Aspinwall were the instrumentalists. It was, needless to say, a great success.

On January 24, the Stetson Opera Company appeared in Gilbert and Sullivan's latest, "The Yeomen of the Guard". The company, greeted by a large audience, was large and as good as any that had ever appeared here, including Signor Brocolini, Miss Lamont, Mabella Baker, George Taverner, James Gilbert, Joseph C. Fay, and Alice Carle. Brocolini's real name was Clark. He was originally a newspaper man on the Brooklyn Eagle. While writing editorials for his paper, he was induced by his friends, who raised \$3500 for the purpose, to go to Italy for voice training. There followed a long career as operatic tenor. The Stetson Company paid John Stetson \$200 a week for the use of his name (Stetson was the distinguished manager of the Globe Theatre in Boston). They also had to pay ^{Rudolph} Aronson of New York a royalty of nine per cent of the gross receipts, of which four per cent went to Gilbert and Sullivan. "On this basis," the Monitor remarked, "it pays better to be plain John Stetson, with a grip on the show business, than to be titled Arthur Sullivan or William S. Gilbert with talents that have made them famous on two continents."

Early in the season Gustav Hinrichs booked his American Opera Company in Wallace's "Maritana". He was supposed to take in Concord on a jump from Montreal to Boston, but on November 26, at 11 A. M., the day set for his appearance, Hinrichs wired from Boston cancelling the date because, he claimed, of sickness of artists and the storm then on. Manager White did not like that. He kept after Hinrichs and got a new date for March 16 in a much greater opera, Verdi's "Il Trovatore". He beat Hinrichs down as to the price of seats, and got a reduction to 50, 75, \$1 and \$1.50. Those reduced prices

were something steep for Concord; nothing above a dollar had ever before been asked here. So the audience was only "good-sized". But they saw a handsomely mounted opera, put on by a company of fourteen principals, a large chorus, a ballet, and an orchestra of twenty, eighty people in all. And Hinrichs was a competent conductor. Alida Varina was the Leonora, Clara Poole was Azucena, William Castle was Manrico, and Alonzo Stoddard the Conte di Luna. A very enthusiastic audience witnessed a performance "without an equal in the musical history of Concord."

Sometimes there is truth in the phrase "the good old times." Standard grand opera well given has for many years been an impossibility in towns like Concord. And it will be long, if ever, before "Trovatore" is again seen here. Though the season showed a marked drop in the number of bookings, and there were too many small houses, no season could be called a failure that brought so many attractions.

Season of 1889-1890.

The fifteenth season of the Opera House was marked by ~~by~~ decided slump in the bookings. In part this was due to the fact that many entertainments that would formerly have been held in the Opera House went to the newly completed hall on the third floor of Chase's Block at 15 North Main Street. A contributing cause was the wide-spread epidemic of "la grippe" that seized the country during the early part of the season and depleted audiences everywhere. Many show^{ws} had to close for this reason. Two bookings for early January at the Opera House were cancelled. The hoped-for snow was late in arriving, but when it came it laid a blanket over the germs. After that, audiences picked up and the season was a good one.

Though Opera House attendance was usually very light during the early

months of the season, there were a few notable exceptions. On October 11 Charles B. and Thomas Jefferson brought to town their production of L. R. Shewell's "Shadows of a Great City", with Annie Ward Tiffany and Rose Tiffany and George R. Edeson. They delighted a large audience. The first named was declared to be by far the best impersonator of an Irish woman ever seen here. The other two, cast in very minor parts, turned them into principal features in a great performance. Edeson was the father of a star-to-be, Robert Edeson.

A week later an even greater house greeted the first local performance of Denman Thompson's and George W. Ryer's "The Two Sisters", then beginning its second season. On December 13 and 14, Hanlon's "Fantasma", a remarkably fine show, with Edward Hanlon, turned out two great audiences and had a financial success as well as success in every other way.

Denman Thompson, still on his three-year New York run, sent his road company along in "The Old Homestead". That company, competent ^{as} though it was (James F. Dean was the Cy Prime and Henrietta Irving was a perfect Aunt Matilda) proved that the play was the thing, even without the great player. James O'Neill returned in "Monte Christo", and Richard Golden, better than ever, in "Old Jed Prouty". Charles B. Jefferson's and H. S. Taylor's "Hands Across the Sea", a play famous in its day, came twice. But the great dramatic event of the season came on February 17 when Mlle. Rhea played Josephine and William Harris played Napoleon in "Josephine, Empress of the French". There was a large audience, and the Monitor could not find enough words of praise.

Repertoire was hard hit. Edward P. Sullivan came for three days in December at 25, 35 and 50 cents. The prices were practically doubled over the old-time rate and the epidemic was in full swing,

so Sullivan, acclaimed much during prior appearances, played, on his last night, Bartley Campbell's "Fate" to an almost empty house. Zeffie Tilbury and Arthur Lewis, fresh from several seasons with Mary Anderson in England, did better in September at the lower rates of 15, 25, and 35 cents. They did "Romeo and Juliet" twice during that week, and that was the best thing they did. Their company was rated as superior to most of the 75-centers. They came back in April for three days and played grandly to moderate houses at a top of 50 cents. "Rosedale" was then in their repertoire.

Local dramatics again centered around Mrs. Belle M. Locke and her gifted pupils, who gave "Nevada" in February and "Dollars and Cents" in May. The Concord Opera Company put on "Fantine" under Blaisdell's direction on January 28 and February 18. The chorus of sixty was the equal of any ever heard in opera here, and the performance as a whole topped any amateur operatic performance seen here up to that time. Blaisdell distinguished himself by taking the piano score of the opera and orchestrating it for some twenty men, including oboe, bassoon, and two horns. He gave no symphony concert this season. His orchestra was out of town more than usual on tours to musical festivals all over northern New England and northern New York. For professional opera Concord this year was less blessed than in many seasons, but Heinrich Conried, later director of the Metropolitan Opera, brought his Comic Opera Company of 67 in "The King's Fool". This was the first local appearance of Della Fox.

Gilmore's Band packed the house in April, but Liberati (whose concert was even more highly praised) came on June 18 when the season was waning and played to a meager house. Concord, said Liberati, "ees no good." But the great concert of the season, as far as acclaim

went, was that by Miss Mary Howe. This was her ^{first Concord} ~~second~~ appearance. It is impossible to express or explain the great furore that this singer and her surpassing beauty created here. The morning that tickets went on sale at Mace's, 700 were avidly taken. She was greeted by a densely packed house; there were "storms of applause." And she had more than excellent support in Ivan Morawski and Blaisdell's Orchestra.

This season three local boys went on the road with the Frost and Fanshaw Company--the Cressy Brothers and W. C. West. The Cressys made a great success on the New England circuit and had an offer from the Myrtle Dramatic Company of New York that they refused to accept. While Frost and Fanshaw were at Lee, Massachusetts, their leading lady, Blanche M. Dayne, married Will Cressy, January 19, 1890. That was the beginning of a long and happy and successful career for Cressy and Dayne. But it was the death of the team of Cressy Brothers. Will Cressy and his wife left Frost and Fanshaw some time later and after a short stay here joined the Orson Clifford Company on the New York circuit (Monitor, September 18, November 15, 1889, January 27, 1890, April 30, 1890).



Yours in June
Harry C. Clarke.

Also in "Shamus" (H. C. Pearson's notes): H. B. Cahill, Annie Lewis

Season of 1886-1887.

Date	Event	Monitor reference
Sept. 15.	Reopening. Mr. & Mrs. George S. Knight in "Over the Garden Wall". In the company were the three St. Felix Sisters and "the eccentric comedian, Edwin Foy". But the yet-to-be-famous Eddie Foy was not mentioned in the review, which noted the better stage, a piece improved since its last appearance, and a "brilliant success."	Sept. 9, 16
20.	^{Chas. F.} Atkinson's Comedy Co., "Peck's Bad Boy and His Pa". 35, 50¢ 400 paid \$200 to see the show, pronounced better than before.	Sep. 14, 21
24.	Harry C. Clarke, musical comedy, "Chestnuts" Blaisdell's Orchestra. 35, 50, 75¢ The "comedy was as poor as Concord often sees." Nothing was good except Clarke's imitations of Henry Irving. A \$75 house.	Sept. 21, 25
27.	Horace Lewis in Dumas' "Monte Christo" Blaisdell's Orchestra. 35, 50, 75¢ Good audience for a stormy night. Company good; piece well staged. Lewis had risen to stardom from the company of James O'Neill, who made the part of Monte Christo famous.	Sept. 21, 28
29.	Charles H. Clarke's "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" Blaisdell's Orchestra. 25, 35, 50¢ Small audience.	Sept. 25, 30
Oct. 1.	(Union Hall) State Capital Base Ball Association Meeting to discuss the \$1200 debt resulting from the past season	Oct. 1, 2
1.	Alfred the Great ^(Alfred F.) & Humpty Dumpty Co. 35, 50, 75¢ After the first night the Monitor (for advertising purposes?) called the show good, but the final judgment was that it "was as poor as it could well be."	Sep. 27, Oct. 2, 4
2.	(Union Hall) State Capital Base Ball Association again struggles with the problem of the debt.	Oct. 4
4.	Wheeler's Ideal Minstrels 25, 35, 50¢ Good audience.	Sep. 29, Oct. 5.
6.	Chas. Verner & Annie Lewis in Fred Maeder's "Shamus O'Brien". Blaisdell's Orchestra. 35, 50, 75¢. Fair house.	Oct. 2, 7

Marshall P. Wickes

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Season of 1886-1887.

Oct. 9. Atkinson's Aphrodite Co. in "Aphrodite" (musical). Oct. 6, 11
Blaisdell's Orchestra. 35, 50, 75¢
Aphrodite, Miss Lillie Bate
Leander, Charles Atkinson
Bob Shaver, John B. Mackie
Ada Parker, Miss Julie Smith
Much praised.

12. (Union Hall) State Capital Base Ball Assn. Oct. 13
\$635 raised to meet deficit; over \$600 to go.

12. First in Blaisdell-Stone Course. Oct. 11, 12, 13
Blaisdell's Symphony Orchestra of 25
Miss Elizabeth M. Roberts, contralto
Marshall P. Wilder, great humorist
Mendelssohn's Fourth complete
For program, see G.D. Scrap Book, p. 6 and B.B. White Collection

In cast (L.C.P. notes):
Robert P. Libbs
15. Rhea's "Farewell". "Frou-Frou" Oct. 11, 16
Eastman's Orchestra. 50, 75, \$1
Large audience. Rhea's Gilberte
was a "powerful, even, and well sus-
tained conception", though the death-scene
was "too ghastly". Ida Waterman as Louise
and Arthur Forrest as Henry Sartorys
shared the honors. The rest of the sup-
port was above the average.
For program, see G.D. Scrap Book, p. 19 and B.B. White Collection

19. Harrigan's Double Hibernian Co. in "The Two Oct. 16, 20
Barneys, or Mulligan's Double".

25, 35, 50¢. Several hundred "greatly
enjoyed" a panorama of Irish views and
specialties.

21. Democratic Rally. Principal speaker, Eben F. Oct. 22
Pillsbury, Boston.

25. Gilbert Opera Co. in "The Mascot" Oct. 21, 26, 27

26. Same in Geo. Lowell Tracy's "Uncle Tom"
15, 25, 35¢

George Lowell Tracy, director
Chorus of twenty (fine)
600 first night; large audience, second.

Mascot cast: Flametta, Miss Florence Bate
Lorenzo, James Gilbert
Bettina, Miss Bessie Fairbairn
Frederick, J. A. Osgood
Pippo, J. A. Montgomery
Rocco, Bellows

Uncle Tom cast: Uncle Tom, W.J. McLaughlin
Harris, H. F. Stow
Topsy, Hattie Ernst
Marks, James Gilbert
Eliza, Bessie Fairbairn
Legree, J. A. Montgomery
St. Clair, J. A. Osgood

SENATE CHAMBER
WASHINGTON

Feb 21

Dear Mrs King

I regret very much
that I cannot comply with
your request - My hands
were bound some time
since, and my Class finds
it impossible to find
any unpledged

Sincerely
Mary Kay

-178-179
Season of 1886-1887.

Oct. 28. Republican Rally. William P. Frye of Maine. Oct. 29.
Capacity audience.

29. Billy Barry & Hugh Fay in "Muldoon and Mulcahy". Oct. 29
25, 35, 50, 75¢

Nov. One week of Atkinson & Cook's Stock Co. Oct. 27.

10, 20, 30¢. Isabel & O'Brien's Orchestra.
Maude Banks, leading lady; Edward P. Sullivan, leading
man; John T. Craven (late of Boston Theatre), leading
comedian.

1. "Ingomar". Large audience; "really fine performance". Nov. 2
2. "Little Em'ly". Packed house; better given than Nov. 3
by Thayer's high-priced company 9 years ago.
3. "The Lady of Lyons". Crowded house; "thoroughly excellent" Nov. 4
4. "Love and Money". "success as complete as any" Nov. 5
5. "Camille". Crowded; "greatest success of the engage- Nov. 6
ment, and as a whole will rank with any sim-
ilar production on the local stage for a long
time." Program, B.C. White Collection

6. Matinee. "Little Em'ly" Nov. 6

6. Evening. Henry Byron's "Blow for Blow" Nov. 8
Having practically filled the house for ⁸even perfor-
mances, the company was booked at once for a return.
(Many people now living recall the stir made by this
remarkable dime show)

8. Denman Thompson in "The Old Homestead" Nov. 6, 8, 9

Blaisdell's Orchestra.
First local performance; crowded house.

Joshua Whitcomb, Denman Thompson
Cy Prime, George A. Beane
Happy Jack,)
Jack Hazard)

Ricketty Ann, Annie Thompson
Aunt Matilda, Mrs. Louisa Morse
Henry Hopkins) Walter Lennox, Sr.
Seth Perkins)

Eb. Ganzy) J. L. Morgan

Hoboken Terror)
Francis Fogarty) Frank Mara

Mrs. Maguire)
Maggie O'Flaherty, Minnie Luckstone
Judge Patterson, Gus Kammerlee

For program, see G.D. Scrap Book, p. 20

10. Second of Blaisdell-Stone Course. Nov. 8, 11

Maritana Opera Co. in "The Madcap"

Leon Keach, director. Blaisdell's Or.

Rose Challet, Alice May Esty

Lisette, Gertrude Edmonds

Fabrice, J. C. Bartlett

Sergt. Beaumarcher, Lon F. Brine

Corp. Bombard) H. L. Cornell

Father Jerome)

Simon Pinchard, Myron Clark

.Large audience.

For program, see G.D. Scrap Book, p. 20 and B.C. White Coll.

*Ed. says Barry C. Knowles
was Mrs. Hopkins, and
Virginia Marlone was
Annie Hopkins; A. J.
Rogers was Farmer
Dickerman
Alfred Swartz was
John Freeman
Lillian Stone was
Nellie Freeman*

1-22
Feb 5th 1891
New York.

Dear Madame

I have much pleasure
of sending you the
enclosed card, and
would be most happy
to call, will you kindly
let me know the day
which would suit
you to receive me.

Very sincerely yours
Alvin Hauff de Warteegg

Warren House
Corner Broadway & 43rd St.

Alvin Hauff -
de Warteegg

N. Y. Nov 1885

Season of 1886-1887.

see over

Nov. 14. W. H. H. Murray. Lecture, "The Three Kingdoms: Nov. 10, 15
of Mind, Heart, Soul". 25, 35¢
500 people "almost spellbound for an hour
and a half."

16. "Adirondack" Murray reads from his tales and sketches. Nov. 16, 17
25, 35¢
400 had "such enjoyment as few public readings afford"

17. Frank Jones & Alice Montague in "Si Perkins" (rube) Nov. 11, 15, 18
35, 50, 75¢
Good audience; "quaint sayings and humorous situations".

22. Schoolcraft, Coe & Shortis's Minstrels. Nov. 16, 23
25, 35, 50¢
Drew a large audience and \$200.

23. Prof. E. C. Taylor, magician Nov. 18, 24, 26, 27, 29
24.
25.
26.
27.

Prizes drawn; large audiences; better than 3 years ago.

30. "Longfellow's Dream" (amateur) Nov. 26, 30
35, 50¢
George B. Wright in cast, ~~seemingly his first~~
~~appearance that got into print.~~ Among the many
others taking part, the only survivors appear
to be Maude Noyes (Blackwood), Annie Dietrich
(Brown), Will Smith, (Stella) May Britton (Jenks),
and Arthur K. Day.

Dec. 1. Minnie Hauk (first N. H. appearance) Nov. 26, Dec. 1, 2
with her concert company: Miss Mathilde
Muellenbach, contralto, Sig. Carlo Spigaroli, tenor,
George Fox, baritone, Charles E. Pratt, accompanist,
and Chevalier de Kontski, pianist. The third
act of "Faust" was given with costumes and scenery.
There was a "large and distinguished audience";
"the finest bit of opera seen here"; "de Kontski
simply repeated his former triumphs here."
The prices, to hear the star of the Mapleson
Opera Co., were 50, 75, \$1. *For program, see L.D. Scrap Book, p. 23*

6. Fair, Canton Wilkey, Patriarchs Militant Dec. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10
7. Benefit of Odd Fellows Home.
8. Second and third days, dinner, 12-2, Union Hall.
9. First night; speeches; Third Regt. Band
Second: H.F. Smart, "An Evening With the Stereopticon"
Third: drill by the Canton; farce, "The Midnight Intruder"
Timid, Fred E. Cloudman
Knock Kneed Sam, A. F. Tandy
Zeb Ferguson, Fred S. Johnson
Dark Lantern Bill, C. C. Nutter
Intelligent Canine, J. E. Morrison
Jennie, Ella Ferrin
Season, \$1; single admission, 25¢; dinner, 25¢

W. H. H. Murray

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Season of 1886-1887.

- Dec. 13. Third, Blaisdell's Stone Course
 Blaisdell Symphony
 Mrs. Maud M. Starkweather, soprano
 Movements from Schubert B minor, Raff
 Lenora and Beethoven Seventh.
 Declared to be the equal of any ever given by
 Blaisdell. *For program, see G.D. Scrap Book, p. 6*
- Dec. 2, 14
16. First of W. C. T. U. Course (Union Hall) Dec. 14, 15, 16, 17
 Abby Morton Diaz, "Woman's Work for the Millennium"
20. Whitmore and Clark's Minstrels Dec. 15, 20, 21
 Street parade; audience not large.
22. (Union Hall) Second of W. C. T. U. Course Dec. 23
 Sarah M. Perkins, "The White Cross"
28. Universalist Christmas Party. Blaisdell's Or. Dec. 23, 31
 Gents, 50¢; ladies, 25¢
30. (Union Hall) Third of W. C. T. U. Course Dec. 29, 31
 Rosa Aldrich, "Respiration"
- Jan 7. Our Club (W. C. Nelson, stage manager; Belle Locke, director; A. F. Shepard, props) [Dec. 22, 27, Jan. 3, 11, 12, 18
 Frances Hodgson Burnett's "Esmeralda"
 Esmeralda, Belle M. Locke
 Old Man Rogers, W. P. Underhill
 Lydia Ann Rogers, Carrie M. Mower
 Dave Hardy, George B. Wright
 Estabrook, Henry B. Colby
 Marquis de Montessire } Arthur F. Shepard
 Jack Desmond }
 Nora Desmond, Eva Eastman
 Kate Desmond, Fanny B. Smith
 George Drew, J. T. Akroyd
 Maid, Miss Hardy
 Blaisdell's Orchestra. 25, 35¢
 Performance compared favorably with those
 by professionals seen here in the play.
 Underhill made "his greatest success".
 Crowded house. Repeated at Asylum Jan. 11
 and at Pittsfield Jan. 18.
4. First of Civil War Lectures, Gen. John L. Wheeler Jan. 3, 5
 with stereopticon, "From Sumter to Antietam".
 Course of four, \$1.50; singles, 35, 50¢.
 Benefit of State Capital Base Ball Assn.,
 which hoped this to liquidate balance of
 debt. Small audience.
6. Third Regiment Ball Dec. 28, Jan. 4, 7
 Third Regt. Band.
 Blaisdell's Orchestra of 14.
 Balcony 25, 50¢
11. Second Wheeler lecture, "From Antietam to Gettysburg" Jan. 3, 17
 Attendance so poor that the third and fourth
 lectures were given up.

In "Zozo" cast (H. C. Pearson's notes); E. B. Adams

-1821*
Season of 1886-1887.

- Jan. 12. Fourth of Blaisdell-Stone Course
 Standard Concert Co.
 Louise Elliott, soprano
 Mary How, contralto
 Lillian Chandler, violin
 J. H. Ricketson, tenor
 S. Kronberg, baritone
 Rudolph King, pianist
For program, see C.D. Scrap Book, p. 6
- Jan. 10, 13
14. 23d Kearsarge and Eagle Ball
 Blaisdell's Orchestra
 Perry, Childs & Griffin did their statue clog
 Henry W. Ranlett, floor director
 Largest attendance ever; 425 dancing tickets
- Jan. 15
17. Claire Scott in "Mary Stuart"
 35, 50, 75¢
 Mary, Claire Scott
 Leicester, Bruce Hayes
 Mortimer, S. K. Coburn
 Burleigh, Frank C. Ireson
 Hannah, ~~Elizabeth~~ Kate Scott
 Elizabeth, played by a poor substitute whom the
 Monitor generously declined to name
 Blaisdell's Orchestra
 Star much praised; only 200 in house.
- Jan. 12, 18
25. Fifth of Blaisdell-Stone Course
 Temple Male Quartette
 Etta Kileski, soprano
 Mme. Ricard, impersonator
 Jessie Eldridge, reader
 W. S. Sweet, harmonica
 Large audience
- Jan. 21, 22, 26
27. Final W. C. T. U. lecture (Union Hall)
 Ednah D. Cheney, "What's in a Name?"
- Jan. 28
29. Barlow, Wilson & Rankin's Minstrels
 35, 50, 75¢
 Street parade; large audience
- Jan. 24, 29, 30
- Feb. 2. "Zo Zo", a spectacle
 35, 50, 75¢
 Filled the house, despite cold and storm.
 Such scenic effects never before possible here.
- Jan. 26, Feb. 3
9. Kit Clark's Female Minstrels
 35, 50¢
 A program of merit was spoiled by vulgarity
 and profanity heretofore unknown on Concord stage.
 Audience of 450 included twelve women, most of
 whom were driven from the hall by the low-lived
 talk. From now on the infamy of the company pre-
 ceded it, and dwindling audiences put them "on
 the rocks."
- Feb. 3, 10
11. 8th Ball, Hook and Ladder
 Blaisdell's Orchestra. Ranlet, floor director.
 Chas. Reed, impersonator, did "Ostler Joe."
- Feb. 5, 10, 12

Letter from Grace E. Drew Alger. Memory fails her as to
her engagement with Boston Symphony Orchestra. It was
with Blaisdell Feb. 16, 1887, his orchestra augmented by some
Boston Symphony players. She read "Mother and Poet," by
Mrs. Browning. See the program.

~~February 2, 1944~~

Hon. Elwin L. Page
Concord
New Hampshire

Dear Judge Page:

Lately you courteously inquired whether I began my theatrical experiences in Concord, New Hampshire. You said you were collecting data for the Concord Room of the Public Library, and that you were particularly concerned with the entertainment history of Concord residents. I shall try to comply with your request, though the absence of available data makes the furnishing of dates difficult for me.

After two years of training ^{in my late teens} at the Boston School of Oratory, on Beacon Street, of which Moses True Brown was Principal, I returned to Concord, my native city, with no definite plans for the future. The schooling in Boston had been the natural outcome of some ^{and private} younger years of "speaking pieces" on "last days" in public schools and in Sunday school concerts at the Methodist Church. ^{later} Mrs. Harris, whose first name I have forgotten, had been my elocution teacher and had encouraged me to carry on in Boston.

My father, John W. Drew, who later was outstanding in his live work for temperance, helped me to make the connection with the Boston School, and when these two delightful years were concluded, my luggage and I returned to my birthplace.

The event ^{my} which led up ^{with} to the episode about which ^{director} you inquire was the appearance ^{had} of the Boston Symphony Concerts at White's Opera House in 1886. Someone had suggested that, as I ^{had} lately ^{been} graduated from a school of oratory in Boston, I ^{had} ^{been} ^{to} ^{give} a piece on the symphony's program. I did. The audience was very appreciative, and that was that.

Not long after the concert, as I recall it, the local newspapers and bill boards heralded the arrival of Daly Brothers in town to play a farce comedy "Vacation". So they came.

Not only were they in the city, but a morning brought them to ^{my} front door. I happened to answer the door bell. The ~~two~~ ^{two} strangers who stood there stated ^{that} they were two of the several Daly Brothers, and they had come to ask whether I would play with them that evening in "Vacation". They had heard of me in connection with my appearance ⁱⁿ ^{the} Boston Symphony concert, and they simply had to find ^{some} ^{one} to play a girl's part in their performance that night. The actress who regularly did the work was sick and had been left behind in an up-state city.

I protested that I never had been in a play, but they urged that they would make it very easy for me.

"Come down with us now and rehearse," they pleaded.

How I explained to mother what was taking me downtown, ^{that morning} I cannot recall, but I went there with the Daly brothers, and for an hour or two worked very hard trying to learn the business and the lines and how to suit them to the action. All of the entrances and exits were running ones, as I remember them. I spent the balance of the day learning the lines. What I did about the costumes I don't know. I probably wore one of my best dresses. Father was out of town that night until late, and he knew nothing about the incident until he came home.

Somehow I didn't have any stage fright, ^{expired.} but without the help of the various Daly Brothers I might have. They helped me wonderfully. Each time before it was my turn to speak, the one ahead of me whispered the beginning of my speech. So we all got through the comedy harmoniously. Just before the final curtain went down, one of the brothers called me to the foot-lights and introduced me, saying he didn't know how many of the audience had recognized a neighbor and a friend, but it was a fact that I was Miss Grace Drew. The applause was very ~~gratifying~~ ^{stimulating}.

I have no recollection of how I got home that night and told about it to mother. Obviously I must have done so. The next morning when I started out to accompany the group on the train for Nashua, father said he was going with me, he wouldn't have me "travel alone with actors". He stayed with me during the rehearsal after we reached Nashua, and the evening performance, which went off very well. I had had a chance to study and ^{really} learn the text of my part.

The next day father and I returned to Concord, since the girl for whom I was substituting was expected to return in the afternoon. So my brief stage career was interrupted, but only for a few weeks.

Despite father's objection to the stage some people had convinced him of my aptitude, and through a friend of his who was a theatrical manager, I had made my way to Charles Frohman's front door and obtained an outstanding position as Madeline West, the Northern Girl, in Bronson Howard's "Shenandoah", which was being put on at that time. It lasted some six months or more in New York City, and then was sent to California. Mr. Frohman invited me to remain permanently with the company, but my father objected so seriously to my making the long journey, that I gave up the opportunity and stayed in New York for what might turn up.

My subject was "Education and the Stage"

What did turn up was an opportunity to write of my preparation for theatrical experience, which I wrote as a starter for the New York Sun, which published it without changing a word. ~~Then~~ *Then* in logical sequence was the beginning of my newspaper experience as a columnist. For ~~some ten~~ *several* years following I had a daily column, under the pen name of ~~Marjory~~ *Marjory* Daw, which appeared in the New York Press. This journal later was absorbed by the Sun.

I am sorry to have no pertinent pictures or clippings to offer to you for your use in the library. They all disappeared in a garret fire in our country house years ago. I recall that the Concord Monitor and the Patriot were *both* very appreciative.

My newspaper work continued until my marriage in *Boston in* the summer of 1903 to my husband, George W. Alger, whom I *had* met as a young lawyer in New York. If you are interested in him--as I am--you can look him up in Who's Who.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Grace E. D. Alger
(Mrs. George W. Alger)

45 Park Av.
New York City
Feb. 8-1944

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Season of 1886-1887.

Feb. 15. Universalist Valentine Party Feb. 8, 15, 16

7:45. "Slasher vs. Crasher"
 Benjamin Blowhard, E. H. Carter
 Sampson Slasher, H. E. Doyen
 Christopher Crasher, Bert Wright
 Lieutenant Brown, H. B. Cleasby
 John)
 Dinah, Mabel Sinclair
 Rose, Mabel Richardson

9:00. Dancing, Blaisdell's Orchestra
 10:00. Oyster supper, Union Hall
 Couple, \$1; lady, 50¢; balcony, 25, 35¢

16. Sixth and Last, Blaisdell-Stone Course Feb. 11, 17

Blaisdell Symphony

Ladies' Schumann Quartette, Miss H.
 Louise Lane, Mrs. Addie L. Clapp,
 Miss Lizzie M. Hopkins, Mrs. Lena
 Hinckley

Miss Grace E. Drew, local reader

Overture, "The Pilgrims", by Harry
 Brooks Day, had its first
 performance, the composer conducting.

Mendelssohn's "Ray Blas" overture

Strauss's "Vienna Woods"

Beethoven's Fifth complete

Very large audience

For program, see Lib. Scrap Book, p. 6 + B. B. White Coll.

17. Fifth Levee, Canton Wildey

Feb. 18

Blaisdell's Orchestra

21. Prof Bristol's "Equescurriculum"

Feb. 10, 15, 22, 23, 24

22.

23. Matinee and evening

25, 35, 50¢

Street parade. Bristol drove "Colonel Wood"
 without bridle or reins, by touches of the whip,
 followed by a band of six pieces and by sixteen
 of the other horses in the show. A cur chased
 Denver, the trick comic donkey, and Denver
 kicked him off the street.

The show included, besides Denver, the clown,
 the mare Mattie, solving mathematical problems,
 Hornet, a white mustang, rope jumper and imitator
 of a rocking horse, besides jumpers, school horses,
 etc.

Attendance and sales:

First performance,	1059,	\$444.40
Second,	1043,	471.75
Third,	1237,	493.75
Fourth,	931,	443.65
	4270	1853.55

This broke all Opera House records. The
 show that more than kept every promise,
 and probably by far the best trained animal
 show that ever took the road, traveling (22
 beasts and 3 men) in a 72-foot car specially
 designed and built for Bristol, and always
 by passenger train.

Season of 1886-1887.

- Feb. 24. Harry Belmer in "Pavements of Paris", melodrama Feb. 25, 26
25. 28, Mar. 2, 4
26. Matinee and evening.
35, 50%; children under 12, 25%
Gave good satisfaction but played to small audiences. Bristol had taken all Concord loose change for that week. But the company had just as bad business elsewhere. They stranded at Portsmouth on March 2, after two nights there to empty seats.
- Mar. 5. "Zo Zo" returns Mar. 1, 7
Blaisdell's Orchestra. 35, 50, 75%
Good audience.
7. Madison Square Theatre Co., "The Private Secretary" Mar. 5, 8
35, 50, 75%
Frank Tannehill, Jr. as the Secretary
Audience rather small; "grand performance"; better translation than "Nunky"
11. Lizzie May Ulmer in "A Living Chance" Mar. 8, 12
35, 50, 75%
Rather coolly received. The support included George T. Ulmer (the hit of the evening) and George Lester
14. Balabrega's Modern Miracle Co. Balabrega, Mar. 8, 9,
15. Swedish magician, and specialties 15, 16, 17
16.
25, 50%; children, 15%
Well liked. Last night, benefit for E. E. Sturtevant Post No. 2, Grand Army of the Republic.
15. (Union Hall) Annual meeting, State Capital Base Ball Association. Charles R. Corning presided. Mar. 15, 16
J. C. A. Hill elected president. Refused a lease of the Fosterville grounds to the Concord Base Ball Association, to support which L. J. Uffenheimer (Eagle Clothing House) had raised a subscription, which he thereupon paid back
17. (Union Hall) State Capital Base Ball Association. Mar. 16, 18
Voted to lease to any responsible party, but none came forward. Explanation (?)
Uffenheimer had just made a composition with his creditors at 40% in the dollar, and was soon to build a new house.
17. Tony Hart (late of Harrigan & Hart) in "Donnybrook". Mar. 12, 18
35, 50, 75%
Small audience; company better than the piece.
18. Prize Speaking by pupils of Mrs. ^{Sarah Neal} Harris Mar. 12, 19
23. Barlow Bros. & Frost Minstrels, recently Wheeler's. Mar. 18, 23, 24
25, 35, 50%. Parade; not a large audience;
Gave good satisfaction

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Season of 1886-1887.

Apr. 5. Bartley Campbell's "Siberia", 1136th performance. Mar. 29, Apr. 6
35, 50, 75¢

A large production, and a large audience.
Of the large cast, the following had special
mention: Forrest Robinson as Nicolai Naigoff,
Adele Belgrade as Sara, Stella Teuton as Marie,
Frankie McClellan as Vera, C. W. Butler as
Michael Trolsky, Charles B. Waite as Michael Sparia,
and John Daley as Jaracoff. *Program, O. B. White Collection*

8. Herbert D. Allen lectures in the interest of the fraternal insurance scheme of the Order of the Iron Hall Apr. 7, 9

11. Boston Pinafore Co., "Pinafore" Apr. 6, 12
35, 50¢

Sir Joseph, Robert Evans
Ralph, Joseph W. Byrnes
Buttercup, Annie McVeigh
Hebe, Helena Olafson
Bobstay, J. Slattery
Bick, Ed. P. Smith
Josephine, Susie Fulton
Corcoran, Henry Whyte

Fair audience. Cast declared excellent or capital except the last two, who were poor.

13. Concord Musical Association, H. G. Blasidell, dir. Apr. 2, 7, 11, 13, 15
Sixth American performance of
Henry Smart's "The Bride of Dunkerron"
Chorus of 90.

J. C. Bartlett, tenor
Mrs. Maud Starkweather, soprano
A. D. Saxon, baritone
Ada M. Aspinwall, pianist
Blasidell's Orchestra of 12

Second part of six numbers.

Large audience; "performance has never been equalled at a similar entertainment in this city". It was attended by S. M. Appolonio, music critic of the New York Times. Special cadenzas (more difficult than the original) had been written for Mrs. Starkweather (for a guess by Blasidell).

14. Sol Smith Russell in Cal Wallace's "Pa" Apr. 9, 15
35, 50, 75¢

A very large audience saw and heard Russell "at his best".

On program, see S. O. Scrap Book, p. 21, and O. B. White Collection

19. Mrs. Locke's child pupils in "Rebecca's Triumph". Apr. 12
(three acts). 25¢ 15, 20

Mrs. Rokeman, age 40, Ruth Ayers, age 12
Mrs. Delaine, age 60, Josie Cooks, age 15
Rebecca, age 19, Kate Roby, age 11
Clarissa Codman, age 40, Lina Ordway, age 12
Dora Gaines, Maude Badger, age 11
Sadie Morrell, Sadie Davis, age 11

(con, next page)

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Season of 1886-1887.

Jennie Woodman,	Rilla Little, age 10
Nellie Dunbar,	Bertha Dutton, age 9
Emma Stevens,	Mary Connor, age 11
Grace Greenwood,	Kate Mitchell, age 11
Maria Grey,	Georgia Dame, age 10
Alice Leeds,	Ida Ordway, age 14
Gussie Green,	Annie Dougherty, age 12
Katie Connor,	Nellie Chesley, age 12
Gyp,	Scott Locke, age 11
Meg,	Annie Cook, age 11

Large audience; smooth performance.

Apr. 20. Semi-Annual Session, Grand Lodge, I. O. O. F. Apr. 20

20. (Union Hall) Concord Republican Club organized. Apr. 20, 21
 They later occupied rooms in Merchants Block.

21. (Union Hall, P. M.) Merrimack County Convention, Apr. 21, 22
 W. C. T. U.
 (W. O. H., evening) Lecture by Mrs. J. K. Barney.
 Ada M. A spinwall, pianist.

22. Margaret Mather in "As You Like It" Apr. 22, 29
 50, 75, \$1

Rosalind,	Margaret Mather
Jacques,	Milnes Levick
Orlando,	Frederick Paulding
Touchstone,	Eugene Jepson
Oliver,	William Ranous
Adam,	Okane Hillis
The Banished Duke,	Frank Wise
Duke Frederick,	Geo. A. Dalton
LeBeau,	Fred W. Peters
Sylvius,	Charles Fredericks
Corin,	J. B. Porter
Amiens,	Charles Daven
Charles,	Charles Smith
Celia,	Miss Jean Harrold
Audrey,	Mrs. Sol. Smith
Phoebe,	Miss Helen Glidden

Pouring rain, but 300 in the house.
 Mather's Rosalind not so good as her Juliet or
 Leah, but in many respects charming. Support
 mainly good. Levick and Paulding remarkably
 good; Jepson satisfactory; Harrold pleasing.

Program, Old Time Collection

30. 23rd May Festival of Unitarian Ladies. Apr. 23, 26, 30, May 2

4:00. Children's dance.

5:30. Supper, Union Hall.

7:45. Stage show. Burletta, "Old Fritz"

King, L. J. Rundlett

Prince, Dr. Edward French

Baron, A. F. Tandy

Schoppsen, W. P. Underhill

Linda, Eva Eastman

Corporal, George B. Wright

Dancing, Blaisdell's Orchestra. Adm. 25¢; balcony,
 15, 25¢ more; gent dancing, 75¢ extra. Crowded.

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Season of 1886-1887.

- May 2. Return of Atkinson & Cook's Stock Co., 10, 20, 30%. Apr. 27
 2. "Ingomar". Audience, 600-700. May 3
 3. Bartley Campbell's "Divorce". Very large, enthusias-
 tic audience. May 4
 4. Matinee. "The Lady of Lyons". 200 in house May 5
 4. Evening. "A Celebrated Case". Nearly every seat taken. May 5
 5. "Camille". Maude Banks "superb" May 6
 6. Tom Taylor's "The Ticket-of-Leave Man". Large aud. May 7
 7. Matinee. "Little Em'ly". Good audience. May 9
 7. Evening. "The Southern Spy". Largest aud. of week,
 but the poorest play. May 9
14. Charles L. Davis in "Alvin Joslin" May 11, 16
 35, 50, 75¢
 Rather small audience.
18. George R. Simm's "Lights o' London" May 11, 19, 20
 19. Another large production.
 Large audience first night, not quite
 so large the second.
20. (Union Hall) Supper and entertainment, May 17
 Colored Benevolent Society.
 Entertainment, 25¢; children under 12, 10¢
24. Annual Meeting, Concord R. R. May 23, 24
26. Annual Meeting Northern R. R. May 23, 26
30. Afternoon. Memorial Day Exercises May 30
 Orator, John Cochran, Southbridge, Mass.
- June 3. Sprague, Hart & McNerby's Operatic Minstrels June 4, 6
 Manchester amateurs, with Eastman's Orchestra.
 Parade. 25, 35, 50¢
 Audience of 300; "program full and finely carried
 out"; the singing especially noteworthy, with
 solos by M. J. Sullivan.
16. Reception by Concord Odd Fellows to Grand Sire June 16, 17
 John H. White, Albion, N. Y. and Deputy
 Grand Sire John C. Underwood, Covington, Ky.,
 on occasion of dedication of Odd Fellows Home.
 Third Regiment Band.
21. 97th Annual Meeting. N. H. Medical Society June 21, 22
 22.
24. Concord High School Graduation, evening June 25
29. Woman's Suffrage Convention June 30, July 1
 30. Lucy Stone ~~Ex~~ presided. Addresses by
 Henry B. Blackwell, Julia Ward Howe and others.

SUMMARY, 1886-87, W.O.H. alone, 109 events
 U. H. alone, 12
 121

Also in B. & M. (H. B. Pearson's notes): Josie Domaine, John A. Dewey,
Carrie Hall, Farris Hartman, Irene Murphy, Bertie Madigan,
Arthur E. Miller, Carrie Sweeney

Season of 1887-1888.

Date	Event	Monitor reference
Aug. 26.	^{Chas.F.} Atkinson's Comedy Co., "Peck's Bad Boy" 35, 50%. 450 attended	Aug. 20, 27
31.	(Union Hall) Meeting to adopt articles of association for Concord Building & Loan Assn.	Sept. 1
Sept. 7.	(Union Hall) Concord B. & L. Assn. organized.	Sept. 1
8. 9.	Denman Thompson in "The Old Homestead" 50, 75, \$1 First night, 1000 attended. Special trains. Second night, a few less. Total sales, \$995. "Better than ever". The usual cast, but Chauncey Olcott was one of the quartette and sang a solo. For program, see G.D. Scrap Book, p. 26	Sept. 1, 9, 10
	One week of Bennett & Moulton Comic Opera Co. 40 people. Co. orchestra of 7. T. H. Hinton, director. 10, 20, 30%; free souvenirs, at mats.	Sept. 6
12.	"Robert Macaire, or, the Two Thieves"	Sept. 13
13.	"Fantine"	14
14.	Matinee, "Fra Diavolo"	15
14.	Evening, "The Jolly Musketeers"	15
15.	"Fatinitza". Very large audience	16
16.	"The Bohemian Girl". Largest audience yet	17
17.	Matinee, "Pinafore". Large audience	17
17.	Evening, "Robert Macaire". Largest audience of week, except the 16th.	19
	Louise Elissing, Ben Lodge, and Arthur Woolley were the leading principals. Programs for "Robert Macaire", "Fra Diavolo", and "Pinafore" may be found in B. C. White Collection, Concord Room. ^{Thou for "Macaire,"} "The Jolly Musketeers", and "Fatinitza" in G.D. Scrap Book, p. 26	
19.	"Michael Strogoff", a spectacle carrying two cars of scenery and properties. 35, 50, 75¢ Did not meet anticipations; poor company.	Sept. 13 20
21.	Henry Chanfrau in "Kit, the Arkansas Traveller". Henry was the son of the late Frank Chanfrau, who had made a great reputation in the piece. Inferior to his father, but good. Well supported, including (says H.C.P.): Mark Price	Sept. 17 22
23.	Rhea, W. S. Gilbert's "Pygmalion and Galatea". 50, 75, \$1 Rhea good in part, in other parts lacked naturalness. Adelaide Fitz Allen as Cynisca nearly on level with Rhea. Edward Bell as Pygmalion artistic. Rest pleasing or better. Full cast in program, B. C. White Collection. September receipts already ahead of any September since house built. For program, see G.D. Scrap Book, p. 26. Also (H.C.P. notes): Marie Dantes, Robert P. Gibbs, Richard Hayden, J. A. Osgood	Sept. 17, 24